

TOP TIPS FOR INDUSTRY NEWBIES

Kickstart your industry career with these top tips.

Are you just starting out in the fitness industry? Well, welcome to the best place you could ever choose to work!

Having managed gyms across various states of the nation, I've been exposed to many aspiring fitness professionals, all of whom want to follow their passion to help people and make a difference, but many of whom are unaware of what to expect once they're in the industry in terms – for example, the reality of having to make sales, the importance of effective communication, different types of industry professionals, varying employment structures for personal trainers, the fundamentals of operating a business, building a client base, and so on and so on.

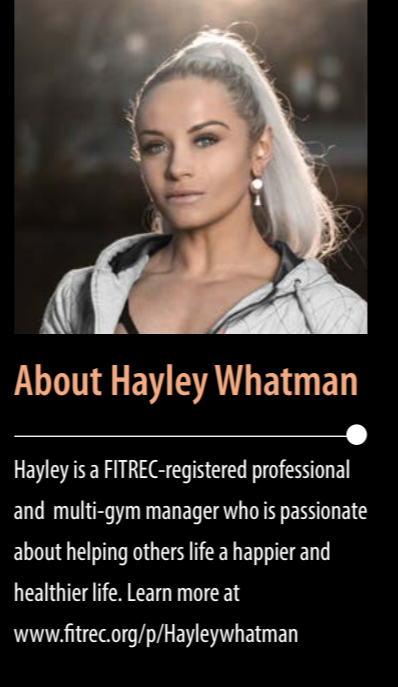
So here are a few tips to help ease you into your new fitness industry role, and to assist you in finding the right place where you can thrive for the long-term.

Tip 1. Experience is key!

Expose yourself to as much practical knowledge application as possible. Outside of work placement hours this could mean getting to know the industry. This could include attending conventions, summits, expos and other events; communicating with others in the industry; or picking up casual gym floor/ reception shifts. By taking every opportunity to experience all that you can, you'll ensure you gain a well rounded and extensive insight into the industry as a whole.

Tip 2. Knowledge is power

You can never know or learn enough! With the ever-growing popularity of people transitioning seeking fitness information from in-person to online sources of information, the likelihood of misinformation being



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consumed and spread is high. It's beneficial for you, therefore, to ensure you are continually researching evidence-based studies, and learning from other reliable sources and courses so that you can remain a leading fitness authority (i.e., the go-to source of information).

Tip 3. Practise within your scope

Don't try and do too many things at once. Giving too much advice can sometimes do more harm than good to our general population clientele. Understanding your qualifications and acting within them is extremely important for legal, business and moral purposes. For example, avoid prescribing specific nutritional plans unless you have become qualified to do so. Rather, give general advice or recommendations around elements such as portion size or understanding the role of a balanced diet. Retaining clients and receiving referrals over the long term, will come naturally when you deliver consistent information, generate mutual trust and produce results. The bottom line is, if you nail the basics, the rest will follow.

Tip 4. Be realistic about sales

Whether you are starting a PT business, instructing group fitness, opening a new facility, or working to assist in membership sales, the fitness industry is built on value. The more value and knowledge you can provide to an individual, the better your results will be. Hard selling no longer works like it used to so be willing to consider new strategies such as:

- ▶ Investing into online marketing and click funnels that target your specific demographic.
- ▶ Understand that the time and cost of generating a lead and following a proven sales process to convert, is much more costly than retaining a client. Retaining a client comes from guiding them on a journey and delivering them value and exceptional customer service. If you decide to treat them like a number, that's how they will act.

TAKEAWAY POINTS

- Expect to start from the bottom and build your client base after providing value.
- When pursuing personal training expect to work all kinds of weird and wonderful hours.
- Expect to work with people who don't enjoy training, but who need to change their health.
- Expect to invest time into administration, marketing and business elements when running a PT business.
- You can never be prepared enough – so just be prepared to be resilient.
- Never stop educating yourself.

Tip 5. Remember the benefits of communication

In our industry we meet people who are at all different stages of their life and, therefore, require varying levels of assistance. Removing your ego and taking the time to understand and effectively communicate with clients and prospects, is highly beneficial. Treat them as the individuals they are by avoiding "cookie cutter" conversations where you deliver the same solution to every lead. Let's use PT as an example.

Without communication, there is no ability to build trust. And without trust you can't expect anyone to adhere to what you're prescribing. See where I'm going?

The solution is to learn to listen – and I mean really listen to what each individual is saying. Because what they tell you, both verbally and non-verbally (e.g. via their body language, tone of voice, mannerisms and eye contact) can help you formulate the most effective approach to guide them towards the tailored solution that you have available for them.

Of course, understanding how to communicate effectively, provide value, and guide individuals towards the solution they need, requires refined skills and experience, which is ideally, an ongoing journey throughout your entire career. The great news is that at every step of the way, you'll be slowly building a loyal client base.

Remember – don't stress when things stray from your plan. Just look for the lessons, implement changes as needed and chalk it up to a learning experience. You can never know enough – or have enough experience. The secret to success is, as the industry grows, you too need to grow with it – not against it. ♦

